ALBERTA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFER

The Provincial Transfer Guides

Originating as a Provincial document designed to record and publicize transfer agreements negotiated in Alberta, the yearly **Provincial Guide** is increasingly popular in other parts of Canada and elsewhere as a means of informing both students and institutions of transfer arrangements considered fair and viable in post-secondary education. Growth in the number of agreements and in the physical size of the Guide now requires more sophisticated (computerized) processes for the accumulation and organization of transfer information.

Production of the **Cumulative Transfer Guide,** a compendium of transfer agreements from 1976 to 1982, has been delayed because of difficulties in securing all necessary data. This Guide will be available early in 1983.

Institutional Disputes

Although the number of inter-institutional disputes which the Council has been called upon to deal with during the past year has not been large, one in particular has continued to make large demands on the Council's time and energy. This has to do with differing views of the basis of senior-course credit entitlement for students transferring from college to university.

Success-Rate Studies

It is in connection with the above dispute that the Council has turned once again to a consideration of success-rate studies.

The Council has already accumulated some random information (mostly from the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge) comparing the success-rate of transfer students with direct-entry students at universities. The data were inconclusive. For this and other reasons — notably a lack of "occasion" for the studies, the Council did not proceed with them. Nevertheless it has been recognized that the need might some day exist, perhaps with reference to a specific problem or problems.

This now turns out to be the case. The dispute referred to above arises from varying convictions about the impact of the "mix" of students at the sending institution on their educational standard and entitlement at the receiving institution. It is argued, on the one hand, that college classes including some students who have not yet met the full prerequisites demanded by universities are necessarily taught at a different (inferior) level insofar as academic standards are concerned. It is argued, on the other hand, that the circumstances of college teaching may at times require a heterogeneous mix, and may in any case provide suitable academic compensations.

Neither view is established in research. The Council, therefore (in accordance with Item 4 of its Terms of Reference), is exploring the feasibility of a success-rate study which would contribute in a practical way to the resolution of the dispute.

Transfer Patterns Studies

These Council studies, designed to provide data on the number and destination of students transferring to Alberta post-secondary institutions both from within and outside the Province, were initiated in 1979. In 1981, following publication of the third report, it was decided to extend the studies for two more years in order to determine the extent to which data available to that date were indicative of trends or constants, rather than simply of random phenomena.

Following, in summary, are some major findings of the fourth (1982) report.

Full-time transfer:

After a steady increase in each of the three previous reporting years, the total of full-time transfer students decreased in 1982 by 4% (5136 - 5784 -6933 - 6653). Generally, in 1982, decreases were experienced in all sectors of full-time transfer except for into-province transfers to non-university institutions.

Of the 3310 **within-province** transfers in 1982, the number of students transferring to universities continues to be higher than the number transferring to the non-university sector (1822 to 1488). The ratio of **into-province** students transferring to universities and to non-university institutions has shifted from 3:1 in previous years to 2:1 in 1982.

Transfer to universities:

In the previous reporting periods, the number of **full-time** students transferring to universities grew steadily for both **within-province** and **into-province** categories. Both categories decreased in 1982 — by 3% and 8% respectively.

The most dramatic trend over the four reporting years has been the growth of **part-time** students — an over-all increase of 155%. **Into-province** transfers have increased by 183% since 1979 (mainly to the University of Calgary). Specifically, Athabasca University has experienced a steady increase in transfers since 1979 for a total gain of 369%.

Transfer into Graduate Studies almost doubled from 1979 to 1980, and subsequently has grown modestly to a 1982 high of 1192 students.

Transfer to non-university institutions

The over-all growth which was reflected in the previous reporting years for **full-time** transfers to non-university institutions ceased in 1982, resulting in a slight decrease. This trend of growth from 1979 to 1981 followed by a decline in 1982 applies also to **within-province** transfers. However, **into-province** transfers continued to increase over the four-year period for a growth rate of 69%.

Within-province full-time transfers to technical institutes have declined gradually over the last two reporting periods. **Into-province** transfers to technical institutes, however, increased substantially in 1982.

Council Membership

Council membership is normally for a period of three years — with overlapping terms so as to provide continuity. For a variety of reasons, however (partly changes in members' institutional obligations and appointments), six of the Council's eleven members were new in 1982.

ADDENDUM A

Council Membership

Universities

Ms. Pam Wolfe Assistant Registrar	Athabasca University
Dr. Amy Zelmer Associate Vice-President, Academic	The University of Alberta
Mr. Jack Oviatt Registrar	The University of Lethbridge
Dr. Horst Betz Department of Economics	The University of Calgary

Public Colleges

Dr. Chuck Day Dean of Instruction	Grant MacEwan Community College
Mr. Fred Fowlow Registrar	Mount Royal College
Dr. Ed Luterbach Academic Dean	Red Deer College
Mr. Ted Walter Academic Chairman	Keyano College

Technical Institutes

Mr. Fred Williamson Academic Vice-President	N.A.I.T.
Mr. Bob Miller Academic Director	S.A.I.T.

Alberta Vocational Centres

Dr. Michael Andrews President	AVC Edmonton

Chairman

Dr. Harold S. Baker

Executive Secretary

Dr. Syeda Hameed

ADDENDUM B

Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference were adopted by Council motion on February 14, 1975:

1. The Council shall review current regulations, proposals and practices for admissions and transfer which have been generated by Advanced Education and by institutions and subsystems for the purpose of identifying those guidelines and procedures applicable to all institutions within the system of advanced education.

2. The Council shall develop procedures by which admissions and transfer policies, guidelines and procedures are granted system-wide approval.

3. The Council shall compile, maintain and disseminate a registry of all existing admissions and transfer arrangements within the Alberta system of advanced education.

4. The Council shall monitor the effectiveness of admissions and transfer policies and practices throughout the advanced education system; to this end it may carry out, or request institutions to carry out appropriate studies.

5. The Council shall recommend to Advanced Education and to institutions revisions of policies, guidelines and procedures as it deems necessary.

6. Acting within the provisions of existing legislation, the Council shall upon the written request of an institution, serve as mediator in resolving inter-institutional admission and transfer problems. (The Council will not deal with requests by individuals.)

7. In the event that agreement cannot be reached through mediation, the Council shall upon written request by the institutions concerned, serve as arbitrator.

8. In fulfilling its arbitration role, the Council shall establish arbitration procedures, inform the institutions of these procedures, and inform the institutions of its decisions, which shall be final and binding.

9. The Council shall advise the Minister of any legislative changes which it deems necessary.

10. The Council, at the request of the Minister or institutions, shall comment on unresolved transfer problems related to proposed programs.

11. The Council shall report annually to the Minister of Advanced Education on its activities.

12. The Council will operate with the support of:

   a) Council members, to be reimbursed by Advanced Education for out-of-pocket expenses incurred;
   b) the Chairman, to be paid an appropriate honorarium; and
   c) an executive secretary and such other necessary resources and services to be made available by Advanced Education as required by the Council in the fulfillment of its responsibilites.

ADDENDUM C

Principles, Policies and Procedures

CONTEXT

1. Role and Composition

The primary goal of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer is the provision of leadership and direction in the improvement and enlargement of education opportunity for Alberta students through inter-institutional transfer. Implicit in this goal is a commitment to improve communication among institutions of the Alberta post-secondary system — and thus to promote the advantages of a "system" of education, with all that this means for economy and efficiency in educational planning.

In the fulfillment of its role, the Council is engaged in the following activities.

(a) **leadership** — including the development and formulation of policies and procedures whereby transfer credit for courses and programs may be negotiated.

(b) **publication** — primarily the production and distribution of a yearly Transfer Guide listing all transfer credit arrangements for courses and programs within the Alberta post-secondary system, together with statements of relevant policies and procedures, and other documents such as an Annual Report and a counselling brochure entitled "What About Transfer?"

(c) **mediation** — as requested by institutions within the system, to resolve complaints or disputes concerning transfer arrangements and credits, and thus to ensure that the best interests of students are served.

(d) **applied research** — on matters related to the transfer of students throughout the system. e.g. Transfer Patterns study.

Council members are appointed by the Minister as follows:

— from the universities: four representatives (one nominated from each university)

— from the colleges: four representatives (nominated by the Council of College Presidents)

— from the technical institutes: two representatives (nominated by each of the technical institutes)

— from the vocational centres: one representative (nominated by these institutions)

— a chairman and an executive secretary

The Council meets usually on a monthly basis, generally at institutions.

2. Overview of the System

The Council's activities are directed primarily towards the Alberta post-secondary system, which includes four universities, ten public colleges, two institutes of technology, four vocational centres, the Banff Centre, as well as private affiliated colleges (see chart, p. 8). There are, in addition, a number of private non-affiliated colleges — some of which may offer courses which have transfer potential. Although the Council's mandate is directed towards the Alberta post-secondary system, the Council is sensitive to student transferability involving institutions outside of the province. For this reason the transfer guide is distributed broadly across Canada as well as in the United States.

3. Types of transfer

Within the system of post-secondary institutions, transfer of credit for courses or programs may occur among institutions of a similar type (i.e. from one technical institute to another), as well as between institutions of different types (i.e. from a vocational centre to a college). In the negotiation of transfer arrangements among institutions, the Council recognizes the following major types:

(a) among universities

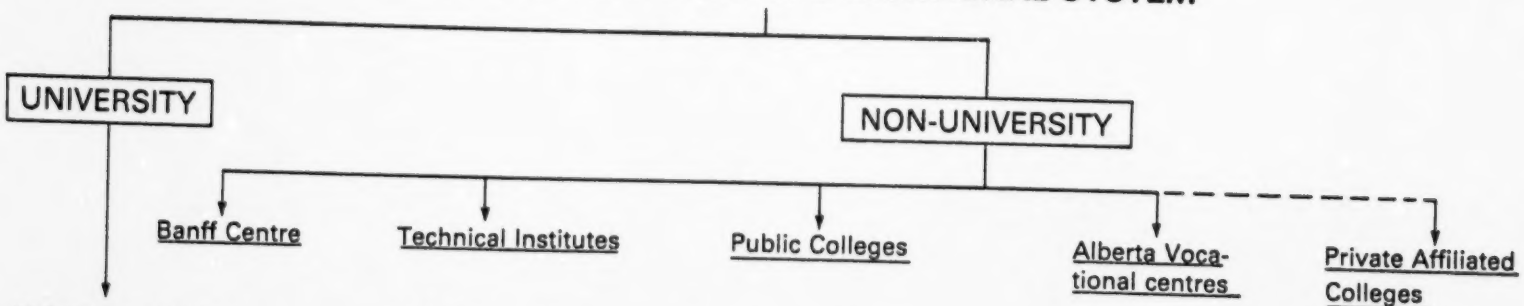
(b) between universities and the non-university sector

(c) among non-university institutions

(d) from private colleges to universities

(e) from private colleges to non-university institutions

ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM



UNIVERSITY

1. University of Alberta
   Edmonton
2. University of Calgary
   Calgary
3. University of Lethbridge
   Lethbridge
4. Athabasca University
   Edmonton
   (Athabasca)

NON-UNIVERSITY

Banff Centre

Technical Institutes

1. Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
   Calgary
2. Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
   Edmonton

Public Colleges

1. Fairview College
   Fairview
2. Grande Prairie Regional College
   Grande Prairie
3. Grant MacEwan Community College
   Edmonton
4. Keyano College
   Fort McMurray
5. Lakeland College
   Lloydminster
6. Lethbridge Community College
   Lethbridge
7. Medicine Hat College
   Medicine Hat
8. Mount Royal College
   Calgary
9. Olds College
   Olds
10. Red Deer College
    Red Deer

Alberta Vocational centres

1. *Calgary*
2. *Edmonton*
3. *Grouard*
4. *Lac La Biche*

Private Affiliated Colleges

1. Camrose Lutheran College
   Camrose
2. Canadian Union College
   College Heights
3. Concordia College
   Edmonton

(Note: there are a number of private non-affiliated colleges throughout the province, some of which may offer courses which are transferable)

4. **Definition of Terms**

In dealing with matters related to transfer, there are several commonly used terms which may require clarification. Some of the more important are:

Accessibility: the degree of openness of institutions to students seeking admission to their programs.

Transferability: the mobility of students among post-secondary institutions by virtue of their having transfer credit (see below).

Advance credit: the award of credit in given courses or programs on the basis of formal and informal learning experiences including: 1) work experience, 2) maturity/life experience, 3) unstructured educational experiences such as self-study, 4) structured educational activity.

Transfer credit: an advance credit awarded on the basis of successful completion of structured educational activities at a post-secondary institution.

Receiving institution: an institution to which students transfer course or program credits acquired at another institution.

Sending institution: an institution from which students may transfer course or program credits to programs at another institution.

Transferable courses: courses developed by an institution to meet its own program objectives but which have transfer potential. Transfer may be negotiated either on the basis of equivalence or of relevance to programs or courses at another institution. (see Page 11)

Transfer courses: courses delivered by a sending institution as courses which correspond in description to courses of a particular receiving institution. (see Page 11)

Selection criteria: categories of qualification, capabilities, or experience (academic or other) which provide the basis for screening and admission (or rejection) of students to programs.

Affiliation: a formal agreement of association or co-operation between two institutions whereby courses and programs offered by the sending institution are substantially the same as those offered by the receiving institution. For such courses transfer credit is awarded. No formal affiliation agreements currently exist except those between three private colleges and the University of Alberta.

PRINCIPLES

The Council endorses the following as basic to its purpose and activities;

(a) **Student access to higher education and the opportunity for student mobility among institutions of higher education in Alberta shall be optimized.**

Barriers to student mobility shall be minimized. The integrity of education programs and certification must, however, be maintained. A student should not be required to repeat previous learning experiences in which he has demonstrated com-

petence, nor should he be granted more transfer credit than his previous learning experiences would warrant for successful completion of a program.

(b) **Negotiation of opportunities for student mobility shall be based on the recognition that while learning experiences may differ in a variety of ways, their substance may be virtually equivalent in terms of content and rigour.**

Insofar as possible, transfer arrangements should allow for maximum recognition of previous learning experiences. The concept of **virtual equivalence** is vital to such arrangements.

(c) **Effective career counselling and optimum mobility require that the student have prior knowledge of at least the minimum transfer credit which he can be awarded. Additional transfer credit may be negotiable on an individual basis.**

(d) **Although responsibility for higher education is shared among various constituents, individual institutions have the primary responsibility for instructional programs. This responsibility includes program design and delivery, determination of academic prerequisites and student admission criteria, and certification of the academic achievement of students.**

In respect of student access to institutions and programs, it is to be emphasized that factors in addition to academic prerequisites often are employed as admission criteria. That is, while possession of academic prerequisites makes an applicant eligible for admission, it does not **guarantee** admission to an institution or to a particular program.

(e) **Institutions have the responsibility and the prerogative to investigate the total educational preparation of applicants seeking admission.**

Such investigation is intended to determine admissibility and appropriate transfer credit, and to counsel applicants. The relevance and quality of the applicant's most recent educational experiences should be the basis for admissibility and for transfer credit decisions. Differences in earlier preparation should not adversely affect consideration of the applicant (see Principle (b) re **virtual equivalence**).

(f) **Students who are granted admission to an institution under a transfer arrangement shall be granted the same rights and privileges as students who began their studies at the institution.**

A POLICY FOR ADMISSION AND TRANSFER OF CREDIT AMONG ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

1. Admission

Admission to a course or program will be granted to any applicant who has fulfilled the admission requirements for such course or program as established by the receiving institution. Where selection procedures are involved in admission to a program, each applicant shall be treated on the same basis as any other person seeking admission to that program.

2. Transfer of credits

Subject to the above requirements there shall be two major transfer arrangements. The Council on Admissions and Transfer will publish annually a Provincial Transfer Guide listing credit equivalencies including both types of transfer arrangement.

A. **Transferable courses and programs:**

These are developed by a sending institution to meet its own programs and objectives, and bear its own numbers and descriptions. Transfer may be negotiated either on the basis of equivalence, or of relevance. The principle of **equivalence** refers to courses and programs of the sending institution which are identical or similar to those of the receiving institution. The principle of **relevance** refers to courses of the sending institution which are in the areas or disciplines and at the levels of programs offered by the receiving institution, and are therefore appropriate for credit at the receiving institution.

Credits awarded in this category may involve special inter-institutional arrangements or individual assessment.

B. **Transfer courses and programs:**

These are delivered by a sending institution as courses and programs which correspond in description to those of the receiving institution.

3. Special provisions for university transfer

A. **Among universities:** Transfers are assessed on an individual basis by the receiving institution.

B. **From public colleges and technical institutes:** In lieu of the general admission requirement (see 1, above), admission will be granted to any applicant who upon successful completion of at least a full year's study at the sending institution is recommended in writing by that institution as having satisfied the appropriate matriculation requirements or their equivalent.

C. **From affiliated colleges:** Details of transfer arrangements negotiated under affiliation agreements (currently those in effect between The University of Alberta and Canadian Union College, Concordia College and Camrose Lutheran College) are included in the Provincial Transfer Guide, and where possible are extended to other universities.

PROCEDURES FOR TRANSFER OF CREDIT AMONG ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

To facilitate the negotiation of transfer arrangements among post-secondary institutions, the Council has established the following set of procedures.

Objective

These procedures are designed to provide a mechanism for the negotiation of transfer and transferable courses and programs, and for their inclusion in the Alberta Provincial Transfer Guide.

Categories

Courses and programs proposed for transfer credit are of two main types, each of which involves a different relationship between the sending and receiving institution.

1. **Transferable Courses/Courses with Transfer Potential**

   In negotiations of transfer credit for transferable courses, the sending institution shall supply the receiving institutions with the following information: (a) course description, title, grading practices, weighting and outline, (b) textbooks and other resource materials, and (c) qualifications required for an instructor.

   Additional information may be required at stated intervals for review purposes, or at the discretion of the receiving institutions.

2. **Transfer Courses/Courses in Transfer Programs**

   In negotiations of transfer credit for transfer courses, the sending institution shall supply the receiving institution with the following information: (a) course description, (b) textbooks and other resource materials, and (c) qualifications required for an instructor.

Transfer credit is based on initial negotiations, when the course is first offered by the sending institution. Subsequent negotiations and concurrence of the receiving institution are required where, in view of the receiving institution, course revisions by the sending institution are sufficiently substantial to affect the transfer credit which has been negotiated.

Procedures

1. Each institution shall identify one central contact person (e.g. Registrar or Admissions Officer) who will be responsible for both internal and external distribution of formal transfer proposals and responses.
2. Each institution shall, through its central contact person, maintain and provide on request from other institutions (a) a list of other important institutional contacts for the purpose of facilitating appropriate preliminary discussions, and (b) a description of the internal procedures followed in the institution for the development and/or evaluation of proposals for transfer arrangements.
3. It is expected that proposals for credit will be processed as expeditiously as possible. If the transfer proposal is acceptable, the receiving institution will inform the other institutions in the system

accordingly. The transfer normally will be honoured within the subsystem of which the receiving institution is a constituent.

4. If the transfer proposal is not acceptable, the receiving institution shall supply in writing, to the sending institution, the reason for this decision.

5. In the event that agreement has not been reached pursuant to (3) and (4), an institution may submit to the Council a written request for mediation. Where, in its opinion, the Council determines that a dispute concerning transfer exists, the Council may mediate to resolve the dispute.

6. In the event that agreement cannot be reached pursuant to (5), the institutions in dispute may agree to submit the dispute to Council for arbitration. The Council will then establish procedures for the resolution of the dispute, and issue its decision resolving the dispute. The arbitration decision of the Council shall be final and without appeal or review.

7. Transfer arrangements are to be regarded as relatively enduring bilateral agreements – to be altered, amended or deleted only after mutual consultation. Regular discussion of existing transfer arrangements should take place between sending and receiving institutions. Any institution planning program or course changes which could bear on existing transfer arrangements as recorded in the Provincial Transfer Guide shall, insofar as possible, inform those institutions which would be primarily affected, subject where necessary to renegotiation. In cases where renegotiations of a transfer agreement are requested by either a sending or a receiving institution, the onus is on the institution requesting the change to provide the other institution with sufficient notice and lead-time to permit renegotiation to occur before the next edition of the Transfer Guide.

8. Renegotiation of transfer arrangements is subject to the same guidelines as for the initial negotiations (i.e., 3-6).

9. When a new agreement has been negotiated, it replaces the old agreement in the next edition of the Transfer Guide. If no new agreement can be negotiated prior to preparation of the next edition of the Transfer Guide, the old agreement will be either removed from the Guide or clearly identified as under review.

INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Within the context of the preceding policy and procedures, each institution has particular requirements and practices for admission of students and awarding of transfer credit. These requirements are listed annually in the Provincial Transfer Guide and in institutional calendars.